

**Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:**

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Please cancel claims 1-32, 35-37, 40 and 41, without prejudice.

Please amend claim 38 and withdrawn claims 42 and 43 as indicated below, without prejudice, where stricken through language is being deleted and underlined language is being inserted.

Please insert new claims 47 and 48 as noted below.

The status of the claims in this application following the entry of this amendment is set forth in the following listing of claims:

1-25. (Canceled)

33. (Previously presented) An isolated protein having the amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO: 23.

34. (Previously presented) A mature, processed form of the isolated protein of claim 33, having the amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO: 35.

38. (Currently amended) An isolated protein consisting of at least one ~~conserved~~ first region having an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:11;
- (ii) residues 109 to 120 of SEQ ID NO:11
- (iii) residues 144 to 198 of SEQ ID NO:11;
- (iv) residues 221 to 239 of SEQ ID NO:11; and
- (v) residues 249 to 604 of SEQ ID NO:11;

and

at least one ~~variable~~ second region having an amino acid or amino acid sequence, the amino acid being (a) residue 51 of SEQ ID NO:11, and the amino acid sequence being selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) ~~residue 51 of SEQ ID NO:11;~~
- (b) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:11;

- (c) residues 121 to 134 of SEQ ID NO:11;
- (d) residues 199 to 220 of SEQ ID NO:11; and
- (e) residues 240 to 248 of SEQ ID NO:11;

wherein an Xaa residue in SEQ ID NO:11 may be an absent amino acid or an amino acid residue at a corresponding position in any one of SEQ ID NOS:1-10; and

wherein upon administration to a mammal the isolated protein elicits an immune response against one or more strains of *N. meningitidis*.

39. (Previously presented) The isolated protein of claim 38, having an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:23; SEQ ID NO:24; SEQ ID NO:26; SEQ ID NO:35; SEQ ID NO:36; and SEQ ID NO:38.

42. (Withdrawn and currently amended) The isolated protein of claim 38, wherein the at least one ~~conserved~~ first region amino acid sequence is selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (ii) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (iii) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (iv) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (v) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (vi) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (vii) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (viii) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:8;
- (ix) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (x) residues 1 to 50 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xi) residues 109 to 120 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xii) residues 103 to 114 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xiii) residues 106 to 117 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xiv) residues 105 to 116 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (xv) residues 109 to 120 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xvi) residues 106 to 117 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xvii) residues 105 to 116 of SEQ ID NO:7;

- (xviii) residues 105 to 116 of SEQ ID NO:8;
- (xix) residues 105 to 116 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (xx) residues 103 to 114 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xxi) residues 134 to 188 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xxii) residues 134 to 188 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xxiii) residues 131 to 185 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xxiv) residues 136 to 190 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (xxv) residues 134 to 188 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xxvi) residues 141 to 195 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xxvii) residues 140 to 194 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (xxviii) residues 140 to 194 of SEQ ID NO: 8;
- (xxix) residues 136 to 190 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (xxx) residues 134 to 188 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xxxi) residues 211 to 229 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xxxii) residues 211 to 229 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xxxiii) residues 206 to 224 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xxxiv) residues 213 to 231 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (xxxv) residues 211 to 229 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xxxvi) residues 218 to 236 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xxxvii) residues 217 to 235 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (xxxviii) residues 217 to 235 of SEQ ID NO:8;
- (xxxix) residues 213 to 231 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (xl) residues 209 to 227 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xli) residues 237 to 591 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xlii) residues 237 to 592 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xliii) residues 235 to 589 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xliv) residues 239 to 594 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (xlv) residues 237 to 591 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xlvi) residues 244 to 599 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xlvii) residues 243 to 598 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (xlviii) residues 243 to 598 of SEQ ID NO:8.
- (xlix) residues 239 to 594 of SEQ ID NO:9; and

(l) residues 237 to 592 of SEQ ID NO:10.

43. (Withdrawn and currently amended) The isolated protein of claim 38, wherein the at least one ~~variable~~ second region amino acid is selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (ii) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (iii) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (iv) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (v) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (vi) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (vii) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (viii) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:8;
- (ix) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (x) residues 52 to 54 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xi) residues 121 to 124 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xii) residues 115 to 124 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xiii) residues 118 to 121 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xiv) residues 117 to 126 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (xv) residues 121 to 124 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xvi) residues 118 to 131 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xvii) residues 117 to 130 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (xviii) residues 117 to 130 of SEQ ID NO:8;
- (xix) residues 117 to 126 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (xx) residues 115 to 124 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xxi) residues 189 to 210 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xxii) residues 189 to 210 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xxiii) residues 186 to 205 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xxiv) residues 191 to 212 of SEQ ID NO: 4;
- (xxv) residues 189 to 210 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xxvi) residues 196 to 217 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xxvii) residues 195 to 216 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (xxviii) residues 195 to 216 of SEQ ID NO: 8;

- (xxix) residues 191 to 212 of SEQ ID NO:9;
- (xxx) residues 189 to 208 of SEQ ID NO:10;
- (xxxi) residues 230 to 236 of SEQ ID NO:1;
- (xxxii) residues 230 to 236 of SEQ ID NO:2;
- (xxxiii) residues 225 to 234 of SEQ ID NO:3;
- (xxxiv) residues 232 to 238 of SEQ ID NO:4;
- (xxxv) residues 230 to 236 of SEQ ID NO:5;
- (xxxvi) residues 237 to 243 of SEQ ID NO:6;
- (xxxvii) residues 236 to 242 of SEQ ID NO:7;
- (xxxviii) residues 236 to 242 of SEQ ID NO:8;
- (xxxix) residues 232 to 238 of SEQ ID NO:9; and
- (xl) residues 228 to 236 of SEQ ID NO:10.

44. (Previously presented) An isolated fusion protein consisting of the isolated protein of claim 38 and at least one fusion partner protein.

45. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising one or more isolated proteins according to claim 38 and a pharmaceutically-acceptable carrier, diluent, or excipient.

46. (Previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 45 which is immunogenic.

47. (New) An isolated protein having at least 80% sequence identity to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:23; SEQ ID NO:24; SEQ ID NO:26; SEQ ID NO:35; SEQ ID NO:36; and SEQ ID NO:38.

48. (New) An isolated protein having at least 90% sequence identity to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:23; SEQ ID NO:24; SEQ ID NO:26; SEQ ID NO:35; SEQ ID NO:36; and SEQ ID NO:38.